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AN INDEPENDENT FOREIGN POLICY

Speech by the Honourable Paul Martin to
the Canadian Club, Toronto, January 31, 1966.

Today I wish to speak about the independence of our foreign policy and its relationship to the interests of other nations in the world community.

The word independence has a powerful appeal to most people in the world, and to no people more than the Canadians. It is not so very long ago that we attained the final stages of full sovereignty by taking over complete control of our external relations. With the approach of the centenary, we are thinking of the contribution to that development of some of the great architects of our independence.

Sir Wilfred Laurier was asked at the Jubilee celebration of Queen Victoria in 1897 whether Canada would one day become a nation. He answered: "Canada is a nation. Canada is free and freedom is its nationality". In insisting that the first and indisputable mark of our identity was the independence which Canadians of diverse origins sought and cherished in common, this great Prime Minister proclaimed a confidence in our destiny which has sustained us since then.

Another great Canadian leader, Sir Robert Borden, made the following comment in 1918 at the end of an exhausting war in which the protection of Canadian interests in relation with more powerful allies had been no easy matter: "I am beginning to feel that, in the end, and perhaps sooner than later, Canada must assume full sovereignty. She can give better service to Great Britain and the United States and to the world in that way".

In speaking simultaneously of full sovereignty and of service to the world, Sir Robert Borden pointed to the full meaning of independence which I should like to discuss. I might almost entitle my talk "The Uses and Abuses of Independence".